

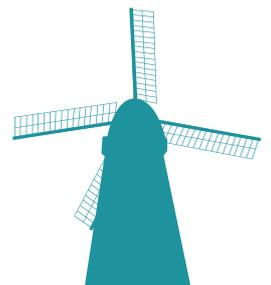
Eastleigh Borough Local Plan 2016-2036



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Statement of Common Ground between Eastleigh Borough Council and Hampshire County Council (as Local Highway Authority)

November 2019



Introduction

This Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) is an agreed statement between Hampshire County Council (HCC) as Highway Authority, and Eastleigh Borough Council (EBC) as the planning authority for the emerging Eastleigh Local Plan. It sets out how we have worked together through the development of the local plan to reach common ground under the “Duty to Cooperate”.

Background

EBC is preparing a Local Plan, which will supersede the existing Eastleigh Local Plan. The new Local Plan will cover the period 2016 – 2036 and sets out the overall vision, objectives and policies to guide future development in the Borough over the plan period.

To help inform and evidence the Plan, the Sub-Regional Transport Model SRTM (administered by Solent Transport) has been used by EBC to assess the strategic transport implications of the proposed land use allocations, including EBC’s preferred SGO (B/C) north-east of Bishopstoke, detailed in the Transport Assessments (TA’s) by SYSTRA (TRA001 and TRA002).

An officer transport working group comprising representatives from HCC, Highways England (HE), EBC, Winchester City Council (WCC), the South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA) and latterly Southampton City Council (SCC) was established for this study and has reviewed the scope, approach and the emerging findings of the TA.

EBC and HCC have had on-going discussions through the preparation of the Plan. HCC, EBC and SYSTRA started to discuss and plan the scope of the final Transport Assessment from August 2017 onwards. Further meetings followed (up to the present time) to review work undertaken in relation to SRTM modelling, the planned interventions and details of the scenario testing needed for the TA.

The TA tested three modelling scenarios for EBC’s preferred development option as follows:

- **2036 Baseline** - A future baseline scenario, excluding any of the Eastleigh Local Plan growth proposals, but allowing for committed developments within the Borough and background traffic growth outside of it in addition to committed transport mitigation measures;
- **2036 Do-Something** - A future scenario including all the Baseline assumptions plus the Local Plan growth and an ‘intermediate’ level of transport interventions and mitigation measures; and
- **2036 Do-More** - As per the Do Something scenario but with a ‘high’ level of transport interventions and mitigation measures.

To provide a consistent measure of the impacts arising from the Local Plan proposals and the effectiveness of the mitigation measures, the results from the three test scenarios have been assessed against the criteria below (these criteria match those applied to other SRTM commissions relating to Local Plan Transport Assessments (TA’s). Volume over capacity (V/C) is reported as a

percentage to express the forecast take-up of available highway capacity at individual locations - hence identifying links with a high V/C is a proxy for identifying junctions with capacity issues:

- a junction where the ratio of V/C on any approach arm was **85%** or more in the Do-Something or Do-More scenario and has increased by **5%** or more compared with the Baseline scenario, is considered as experiencing a **significant** impact;
- a junction where the ratio of V/C on any approach arm was **95%** or more in the Do-Something or Do-More scenario and has increased by **10%** or more compared with the Baseline scenario, is considered as experiencing a **severe** impact;
- a junction where the average delay per vehicle in the Do-Something or Do-More scenario was **two minutes** or more in any period and has increased by **one minute** or more compared with the Baseline scenario, is considered as experiencing a **severe** impact.

The application of the SRTM followed these stages and this was agreed between HCC and EBC:

- **Baseline** - forms the basis against which the proposed Local Plan development will be assessed
- DS1 – SGO sites B (north of Bishopstoke) and C (north-east of Fair Oak) without the northern link road
- DS2 – SGO sites B and C with the northern link road. This is the EBC's draft Local Plan option with an intermediate level of off-site infrastructure interventions
- DS3 – SGO sites B and C with the northern link road. This is the EBC's draft Local Plan option with a high level of off-site infrastructure interventions
- DS4 – SGO site C without the northern link road
- DS5 - SGO site D (south of Bishopstoke)
- DS6 – SGO site E (north of West End)
- DS7 – SGO site D and a small part of E
- DS8 – SGO sites B and C 1000 dwellings plus 250 dwellings (Pembers Hill) without the northern link road. This is simply a technical scenario for modelling purposes.

The thresholds used for assessment of the Local Plan development traffic impacts are acceptable to HCC. Using these defined thresholds set out above to assess the significance of changes between Baseline and Do-Something / Do-More scenarios, the following results emerged:

- **Do-Something Scenario** - 12 locations with Significant impacts and 10 with Severe Impacts;
- **Do-More Scenario** – 17 locations with Significant impacts and 8 with Severe impacts.

On completion of the TA, EBC, by way of the SYSTRA report (TRA002) set out the following areas for junction improvements:

- M3 Junction 12
- New link road
- Other key junctions
- South Downs National Park Villages

M3 Junction 12 - The dumb-bell junctions at M3 J12 have been identified as being over capacity in all test scenarios. An assessment of flows and capacities on the slip roads at this and the other five motorway junctions in the study area has shown that, in the majority of cases, V/C ratios are below 80% and therefore the slip roads are within capacity.

The Southbound-off slip road at M3 J12 exceed 80% in the AM peak and 100% in the PM peak in all scenarios and this has been investigated in a separate report (TRA006 and TRA012 – ED24/25). The improvement to this junction is critical as the new link road adjoins it.

New link road -a new link road is proposed to access the SGO and is a fundamental enabler of the development Masterplan.

Other key junctions – the 8 junctions identified as having severe traffic impact in the ‘Do More’ scenario are as follows - were:

- Botley Road/Eastleigh Road signalised junction
- Winchester Road/Mortimers Lane
- M3 junction 12/Allbrook Way Roundabout
- Winchester Road/Otterbourne Hill
- M3 junction 12 roundabout
- Fair Oak Road/Allington Lane
- A334/B3051/Botley Bypass Roundabout
- Woodhouse Lane/Botley Bypass

The modelling tested proposed mitigation measures at each of these locations and identified that there is a reasonable likelihood that that impact of the local plan site allocation on these junctions could be addressed. At this stage in the planning process this has only considered the highway impacts of increased motorised vehicle traffic. It has not included a more detailed consideration of impacts on public transport or sustainable/active modes or the role they can play in traffic reduction. These will need to be looked at as part of future transport assessments.

South Downs National Park Villages – The modelling work shows an increase in vehicle movements through Owslebury, Upham and Twyford and other rural roads some of which are included in the South Downs National Park. HCC and EBC agree that this is likely to be the case. We also agree that the strategic transport model is likely to over estimate the likely increase in vehicle movements. This is because of the model’s strategic nature and construction which does not fully take into account the ‘country lane’ nature of the roads. It is normal practice to address these concerns through

detailed transport assessments associated with site specific planning applications. To this end future planning applications will need to include mitigation strategies for traffic increases on rural roads and through South Downs National Park. This will need to be factored into the Transport Assessment undertaken for the SGO planning application and any other larger applications.

Issues and Options Representation HCC

During February 2016 HCC commented on the emerging Eastleigh Local Plan via the consultation at the Issues and Options stage, which included the Eastleigh Strategic Transport Study (TRA0010a). This was an interim report which provided an overview of the likely transport issues associated with indicated potential new development areas. It presented and analysed some initial transport infrastructure options, to address existing and projected strategic transport issues and highlighted the need for multi-modal strategic transport infrastructure at key junctions, corridors and congestion hotspots. HCC's full response is attached as Appendix A.

Regulation 19 Representation from HCC

EBC held a six week consultation under Regulation 19 closing on 6 August 2018. At this time HCC agreed with the methodology used by EBC to determine the preferred development strategy and the use of the Sub-regional Transport Model (SRTM) in assessing the highway impacts. HCC's full response is attached as Appendix B. At the time HCC raised some key issues needing further consideration on which there have now been developments. They included:

- The certainty of funding and the deliverability for the Smart Motorways schemes for the M27 and M3. At the time the status of these scheme was that they were committed but not programmed Highways England schemes. As such here was a level of uncertainty about their actual deliverability. The M27 works are currently underway and the M3 works have been programmed. This gives confidence that both these schemes will be delivered.
- Issues related to Strategic Growth Option (SGO) and the deliverability of the link road. The link road is essential to the masterplan for the SGO's, but it is not wholly within EBC's administrative area as part of the route is in Winchester District Council (WCC). At the time it was not clear how this might impact on the deliverability of the link road. The WCC and EBC Statement of Common Ground explains that WCC has "no objection to including a safeguarding policy for the route of the proposed link road within the Winchester District, in its emerging Local Plan, pending the ELP being found sound and proceeding to adoption" (paragraph 19).
- Issues related to Strategic Growth Option (SGO) and slow/partial delivery in association with development viability issues. HCC agree that the scale of the development option should enable sustainable transport outcomes as per the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) principles related to sustainability. Lower scales of development may not and as such HCC were looking for assurances that the link road is affordable and, in the event that it is not, that appropriate mitigation is in place at all stages of development including some certainty around the deliverability and triggers for the link road. EBC and HCC agree that provision of

a link road is critical to the delivery of the SGO and that it needs to be provided at a sufficiently early stage to serve the initial phases of the development. The parties agree that the scheme developed on behalf of EBC appears to be technically feasible. The Inspector will come to a view on the extent of any further work required to demonstrate viability and the timing of the scheme coming forward. The parties will continue to work co-operatively to facilitate delivery of the link road.

- The mitigation measures required at junction 12 of the M3 are also critical, as these are considered necessary to ensure the effective functioning of the link road. HCC and EBC have worked closely to identify solutions and consider that it is more likely than not that a scheme is technically deliverable; more detailed work is needed to definitively assess deliverability. Highways England (HE) is the highway authority for the M3 and for this junction (not HCC), so it will ultimately be the authority needing to determine the acceptability of any future scheme.

Conclusion

HCC and EBC have reached common ground on these aspects of the emerging local plan:

- the methodology behind the transport assessment work and associated modelling
- the principle and elements of the proposed package of highway mitigation
- HCC and EBC agree in principle that the SGO has sufficient critical mass to ensure the intended level of self-containment, when fully developed. Further detailed work is needed to demonstrate how it will sustain extended and new bus services, and support improved facilities for walking, and cycling.
- the improvements proposed to Allbrook Road Rail bridge will improve the current situation for vehicular users. Further detailed work will be required to demonstrate that non-motorised users will not be disadvantaged
- that the certainty behind the deliverability of key highways infrastructure such as the link road and smart motorways is improved. HCC and EBC agree that the link road appears to be technically feasible, and on this basis, it is reasonable to work on the assumption of the delivery of the link road at this stage in the planning process.
- that delivery of critical improvements to M3 Junction 12 will require the full support and approval of Highways England
- that WCC has no objection to safeguarding the route for the Link Road in their administrative boundary
- that many if not all the remaining highway issues should be capable of being resolved through the planning processes associated with future planning applications and the undertaking of detailed transport assessment work

The local highway authority will continue to support and work collaboratively with EBC to ensure satisfactory outcomes for both EBC and HCC are achieved.